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INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4570
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RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 9940
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 2811
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4221
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 9984
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU PRIORITY 0299
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1222
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1875
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 001796

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SUBJECT: PRC APPLYING UNPRECEDENTED PRESSURE ON UNHCR
REGARDING TIBETAN REFUGEES

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Nicholas Dean. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

PRC Dipnote To UNHCR To Prevent Assistance To Transiting
Tibetans

11. (C) Douglas DiSalvo, Associate Protection Officer at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Nepal (UNHCR), told Emboff that on July 7, the PRC Embassy sent a diplomatic note to UNHCR requesting that UNHCR not provide assistance to a group of 16 Tibetans who had crossed the border from China to Nepal around July 2 (text sent via email to SCA/INS and PRM/ANE). According to DiSalvo, the PRC Permrep in Geneva simultaneously delivered a note to UNHCR headquarters, providing a list of the names, ages, and gender of the Tibetans and asking that the UN not provide assistance. Both PRC statements referred to the Tibetans as "illegal immigrants." The PRC Geneva letter expressed China's concern that UNHCR assistance is creating a "pull factor" drawing Tibetans into Nepal. DiSalvo expressed his concern that this was the first time the PRC had requested the UNHCR not to take action and listed specific names -- such requests in the past were general against assistance to all Tibetans. UNHCR requested that the USG not take any action at the current time.

Group Of Tibetans Likely To Transit Soon

12. (C) DiSalvo stated that a group of 16 Tibetans entered Nepal at Kodari, Sindhupalchok District in north-central Nepal around July 2. On July 4, UNHCR assisted the group and transported them to the Tibetan Reception Center (TRC) in Kathmandu. The group told UNHCR that they were originally a group of 17 but one person left during the journey and the group suspected this person was an informant. When the group approached the border of Nepal, there was a large PRC military presence. Although the group of 16 made it through, another group that was following them did not. Per usual practice, UNHCR assisted the group with travel from the border to the TRC, and sent a list with their names to the Government of Nepal (GON), which informs police along that route to facilitate the travel. This list was identical to the list the PRC provided to the UN in Geneva; UNHCR suspects

that someone within the GON leaked it to the PRC. UNHCR plans to send a letter of concern to the GON regarding the confidentiality of their communications. DiSalvo said that

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UNHCR plans to approach the Indian Embassy on July 10 to procure travel documents for the group of 16. The group plans to transit to India as soon as possible. DiSalvo stated that, depending on the status of the group, UNHCR would make a decision soon about whether to attempt to procure exit permits from the GON, or just transit them to India without permits.

Comment

13. (C) The PRC has been applying more pressure to the GON in recent days regarding both transiting and resident Tibetan refugees. The PRC's request to UNHCR to stop providing assistance to transiting Tibetan refugees could also be intended to pressure the GON to reject the proposed resettlement of 5,000 resident Tibetan refugees in the U.S. That said, it could also be a PRC warm-up preceding the July 27 visit of Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister Wu Daewi to Nepal. Though UNHCR has requested the U.S. not to take action at this time, we are in close contact with UNHCR.
DEAN